

Students for organ donation club coming soon

By Heidi Koos
Features Editor

Colette Jordan received a liver transplant last October and since then has felt determined to "pay it forward."

This fall she started taking classes at the college and soon realized the opportunity was here to start a Students for Organ Donation chapter.

Jordan said she wanted to do long-term awareness with the college-aged population, dispelling misconceptions and misunderstandings along the way.

"Students especially—they don't realize how much of a real, tangible effect on saving lives they can have," Jordan said.

The club will be approved at the end of November and Jordan said membership is open to anyone who would like to participate in raising awareness for organ donation.

"I think sometimes people don't vote because they don't think it makes a difference.

Here's something everyone can do. It touches more people than you know," Jordan said.

Donate Life is Illinois' campaign to re-register organ donors after the law changed on January 1, 2006, making additional consent from families unnecessary. Signing the back of your drivers license is no longer a valid means to register and Donate Life estimates that almost two-thirds of Illinois residents are unaware of the need to re-register.

According to Donate Life, 94,000 people are waiting for transplants nationwide and 4,600 Illinois residents are on the organ transplant waiting list.

Jordan organized the college's participation in October's Campus Challenge aimed to register students and faculty. Of 20 colleges involved, ours came in third with 235 registries. Northern Illinois University came in first and University of Illinois

Champagne came in second.

Lives touched by organ donation extend to faculty as well. Kay Allard, an instructor, received a kidney transplant and found her donor in an amazing way.

"I'd been on the national transplant list for over 2 years and had asked any family members who might be willing to be tested...all to no avail. I'm a Realtor as well as a teacher, and one day other agents in my office noticed that I seemed uncharacteristically depressed. I told them that I could no longer hold back dialysis with simply diet and will power. Debbie Ryn-dak, the agent working next to me said, 'What can I do to help?' I replied, 'You could be type O positive and give me one of your kidneys,' Allard said.

"She responded, 'I think I might be and if I am I will.' Not only was she the right type, we were also a good match of other blood elements. Together we bullied



Photo courtesy of Colette Jordan

Colette Jordan, recipient of a liver transplant last October, said that most religions consider donation "the essence of charity."

Northwestern to schedule surgery for us and the transplant occurred on February 13, 2006. Her family supported her in this decision. She says that she's long wondered why God spared her in an illness when she was

younger, and she realized His purpose was to save my life," Allard said.

Allard said she felt raising organ donation awareness on campus was especially important, referring to education's purpose to enlighten.